



General Assembly

January Session, 2017

***Raised Bill No. 7237***

LCO No. 4713



Referred to Committee on HUMAN SERVICES

Introduced by:  
(HS)

***AN ACT CONCERNING AN ADVISORY BOARD FOR PERSONS WHO  
ARE DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 46a-27 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 The [Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired] Advisory  
4 Board for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing is hereby created  
5 to advocate, strengthen and advise the [Department of Rehabilitation  
6 Services] Governor and the General Assembly concerning state policies  
7 affecting deaf and [hearing impaired] hard of hearing individuals and  
8 their relationship to the public, industry, health care and educational  
9 opportunity. The board shall:

10 (1) Monitor services for deaf or hard of hearing persons;

11 (2) Periodically meet with the Commissioners of Public Health,  
12 Social Services, Mental Health and Addiction Services, Education,  
13 Developmental Services, and Children and Families and the Labor

14 Commissioner, or the commissioners' designees, to discuss best  
15 practices and gaps in services for persons who are deaf or hard of  
16 hearing;

17 (3) Monitor complaints concerning the qualification and registration  
18 of interpreters for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing pursuant to  
19 section 46a-33a, and forward any such complaints received by the  
20 board to the entity chosen to review such complaints pursuant to  
21 section 46a-10a, as amended by this act;

22 (4) Make recommendations to the Commissioner of Rehabilitation  
23 Services concerning the qualification and registration of interpreters  
24 pursuant to section 46a-33a; and

25 (5) Report not later than January fifteenth annually in accordance  
26 with the provisions of section 11-4a to the Governor and the joint  
27 standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of  
28 matters relating to human services on recommendations for (A)  
29 technical assistance and resources for state agencies in order to serve  
30 persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, and (B) public policy and  
31 legislative changes needed to address gaps in services.

32 Sec. 2. Section 46a-28 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
33 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

34 (a) The [Commission on the Deaf and Hearing Impaired] Advisory  
35 Board for Persons who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing shall consist of  
36 [twenty-one] fifteen members appointed by the Governor: [, three of  
37 whom shall be ex officio. The ex-officio members shall consist of the  
38 following individuals:] The consultant appointed by the State Board of  
39 Education in accordance with section 10-316a, the president of the  
40 Connecticut Council of Organizations Serving the Deaf, the president  
41 of the Connecticut Association of the Deaf, the president of the  
42 Connecticut Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, the Commissioner of  
43 Rehabilitation Services, the Governor's liaison to the disability  
44 community and the superintendent of the American School for the

45 Deaf, [ The following members shall be voting members: The  
46 Commissioners of Public Health, Social Services, Mental Health,  
47 Education, Developmental Services, and Children and Families and  
48 the Labor Commissioner or their designees and eleven members  
49 appointed by the Governor. Of the members appointed by the  
50 Governor one shall be a physician licensed to practice medicine in this  
51 state and specializing in otolaryngology; one a parent of a student in a  
52 predominantly oral education program, one a parent of a student at  
53 the American School for the Deaf and one a parent of a student in a  
54 public school hearing impaired program, and seven deaf persons, one  
55 of whom shall be a parent] or their designees, a person who is deaf, a  
56 person who is hard of hearing, a person who is deaf and blind, a  
57 parent of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing, an interpreting  
58 professional, a professional who is deaf, an interpreter trainer and an  
59 educator who works with children who are deaf or hard of hearing.  
60 Chairpersons shall be the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services, the  
61 Governor's liaison to the disability community and a board member  
62 chosen by the majority of the board.

63 (b) The [commission] advisory board shall meet at least quarterly or  
64 more often at the call of the chairperson or a majority of the members.  
65 A majority of [the voting] members in office but not less than [seven]  
66 eight voting members shall constitute a quorum.

67 (c) Any appointed member who fails to attend three consecutive  
68 meetings or who fails to attend fifty per cent of all meetings held  
69 during any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned. Vacancies  
70 occurring otherwise than by expiration of term in the membership of  
71 the [commission] advisory board shall be filled by the [officer  
72 authorized to make the original appointments] Governor.

73 [(d) The members of the commission shall be reimbursed for actual  
74 and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.]

75 Sec. 3. Subsection (b) of section 46a-10a of the general statutes is

76 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
77 *passage*):

78 (b) The Connecticut protection and advocacy system shall provide  
79 the following:

80 (1) Protection and advocacy services for people with disabilities, as  
81 provided under the Developmental Disabilities Assistance and Bill of  
82 Rights Act of 2000, 42 USC 15001, as amended from time to time; [and]

83 (2) A client assistance program, as provided under the Workforce  
84 Investment Act of 1998, 29 USC 732, as amended from time to time; [.]  
85 and

86 (3) (A) Oversight of complaints concerning persons who fail to  
87 comply with the provisions of section 46a-33a, and (B) annual reports  
88 not later than January fifteenth on the resolution of such complaints to  
89 the board established pursuant to section 46a-27, as amended by this  
90 act.

91 Sec. 4. Subsection (g) of section 2c-2h of the general statutes is  
92 amended by adding subdivision (5) as follows (*Effective from passage*):

93 (NEW) (5) Oversight Council for Issues Concerning Persons Who  
94 Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing established pursuant to this act.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	46a-27
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	46a-28
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	46a-10a(b)
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	2c-2h(g)

**Statement of Purpose:**

To rename, reconstitute and revise the mission of an advisory board on issues concerning deaf and hard of hearing persons and establish oversight of complaints concerning interpreters.

***[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]***